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Johar Karsana

This game, which is one of the many attractive games played in the big ghotul at Alor, is a saluting game. The motiari form a line, the leader comes forward, bends down with her back to the others and swings to left and right, touching the feet of each in turn. She goes down the line and the next in order follows her.

Song

[539]

Didi boli boli kudum keli lo,	Sister, say, we have stamped our feet,
Ulti pão parilo pulti pão parilo.	Saluting the feet this side and that.
Juna garh dekhilo nawã garh dekhilo.	We saw the old fort, we saw the new fort.
Sākhi chānwur badilo.	We made friendship with rice.
Rāja tika tikilo.	We gave greeting to the Raja.
Son kukra basilo !	O the golden cock crowed!
Kumār kukra basilo	The red cock crowed
Ki hi ri kir.	*Ki hi ri kir.*

Kudum represents the sound of stamping feet. After the song has been sung through to the sister, it is done for the mother-in-law, cousin, sister-in-law, anyone you please.

A Guessing Game

The Muria have a guessing game called Mundi Karsana. In Phulpar the girls stood in a circle holding out their hands. One of the boys put a ring into a girl's hand. Then the other boys had to come one by one to guess where it was.

In Metawand, this was played by boys and girls together sitting down, but the principle was the same. Sometimes the guesser puts his hand on each forehead in turn: it is believed that whoever has the ring will have a hot head.

A Game with Myrabolams

In Nayanar, I watched the chelik playing with *harra*-myrabolams. Two boys sat facing each other, each had a pile of myrabolams. The first boy picked up a handful, threw them into the air, and tried to catch as many as possible on the back of his hand. He failed to catch any, and lost his turn, and the other boy made the attempt. He caught two and put these beside him, the next throw he caught one, then three, but at last, though he had only three stones left, he dropped them all and lost his turn. Then the first boy tried again.[1]

X. Cock-fighting

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Cock-fighting is a popular sport among the Muria of the central and northern parganas, but it is little followed in the east where it is said to be a pastime worthy only of Ganda.[2] But in the west and central areas, cocks are specially

[1] A similar game is known as *Dhapa* by the Pauri Bhuiya.—Roy, *The Hill Bhuiyas*, p. 285. I have seen it in Mandla, and it is probably universally distributed.

[2] For an excellent account of cock-fighting among Kol, Bhumij and Uraon, see *North Indian Notes and Queries*, Vol. II (1892), p. 95. Thurston considered it a 'disgusting spectacle' and agreed with Colonel Newcome that it should be performed in secret. He describes cock-fighting among the Mohammedans of Mysore who do not use steel spurs but

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reared and trained to fight. It is said that in the good old days, the fights used to be between two men, and the spectators bet on the result. Cock-fighting came in when this exciting custom was forbidden. Large meetings

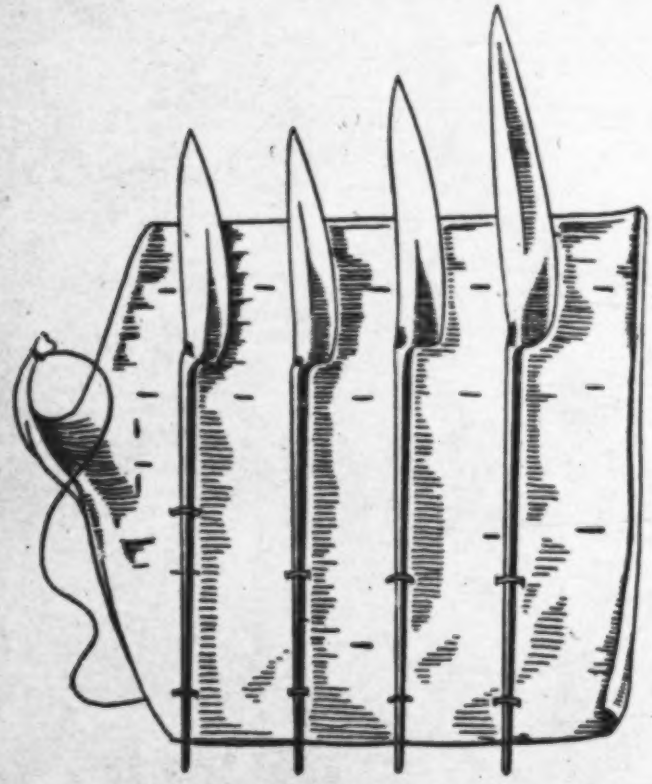

FIG. 146. Set of cock-fighting knives in cloth bag
Length of longest knife 3"

are held at the end of most of the bazaars late in the afternoon. Special meetings are also called in the larger Muria villages, both regularly and on

sharpen the natural spurs with a knife. 'A real good fight' he says 'may last for several hours.' This, and several other details of Thurston's description, seem to me a little doubtful. Thurston adds that the sport was popular in South Canara among the Bant, but since it often led to quarrels was discouraged by the police.—*Ethnographic Notes*, pp. 569ff. I have never seen it in the Central Provinces, though I have watched maina-fighting in Sarangarh State. Other references to cock-fighting will be found in T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, 'Games, Sports and Pastimes in Prehistoric India', *Man in India*, Vol. XXI, p. 144; D. N. Majumdar, 'Games of the Hos of Kolhan', *Man in India*, Vol. V, p. 201; J. Sarkar, 'Assam and the Ahoms in 1660', *JBORS*, Vol. I, p. 186; and in some of the standard monographs on individual tribes.

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541 525 special occasions such as a gathering of the pargana panchayat. In this part the Muria are enthusiastic over the sport and not inconsiderable sums of money pass to and fro in the bets which inevitably accompany a fight. To the gentle Muria the attraction of cock-fighting is not (as it is to the more blood-thirsty Bison-horn Maria) the excitement of blood and battle, but the pleasure of betting. The cock that loses also becomes the property of the winner.

When the company has gathered in the shade of a great grove of trees, the cocks—which have been brought to the place carefully covered—are measured against each other so that in no fight will they be too unfairly matched. The spur-men, who are Muria specially trained in the business, go aside to tie the spurs to the cocks' feet. These spurs are sharp knife-blades about 3" long and slightly curved, made by the Muria Lohar of locally smelted iron, and are kept in little bamboo cases or rolled up in a cloth hold-all.

The spur-man attaches the blades to the cock's feet, spits on the string and binds it round and round until the blades are firmly fixed at exactly the right height and angle. He then removes dirt from his ears, mixes some with the dust from his left foot with a little spittle and rubs the mess on the blades saying, 'O Mahapurub, O the Departed of my house, you know my truth and goodness. It is for you to give this cock victory'. He removes a feather from the cock's tail, cuts it in two with the blade attached to its leg, spits on it and throws it away. If the cock is victorious, the spur-man receives a leg of its defeated adversary.

The owners now pick up their birds and stand facing each other in the middle of a clearing surrounded by an excited crowd of spectators. They hold the cocks out, make them peck at each other and when they are aroused put them on the ground. The birds usually go to the attack at once, and the fight only lasts a short time. The blades are very deadly and I have frequently seen both cocks fall dead after thirty seconds' combat. Once a cock turns away from its adversary, it is considered defeated.

After a victory, the owner of the cock should make an offering of liquor to the Departed. At Binjhli he was expected to give a coconut to the Village Mother. At Ulera, the Muria said that when they put the cocks into battle they remembered the Departed.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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Bison Horn Maria

and uncomplicated view is correct. Social problems are usually very intricate and very simple solutions have so far always been found wanting.

'It cannot be denied, however, that alcoholic liquor is liable to change an individual's mode of reaction, and therefore plays an important part as a crimino-etiological factor. The most prominent psychological effects of alcohol are: emotional changes, usually in the direction of euphoria and increased irritability, but occasionally towards dysphoria (especially in the later stages of intoxication); reduced inhibition of drive impulses, particularly of a sexual nature; more optimistically coloured judgements; a reckless disposition; reduced control of actions; increased physical mobility, with a tendency to impulsive and thoughtless actions; a general lowering of the moral level. These effects indicate that intoxication is conducive to certain kinds of criminality, such as acts of violence—assault, manslaughter, rape and other sexual crimes, defamation and resistance to the police. Alcohol is, as a matter of fact, a more or less important contributory cause in many such crimes'.[1]

674 Typical crimes of drunkenness among the Maria may be briefly illustrated. A man and his wife were illegally distilling mahua liquor in a field. They both got very drunk on the fresh spirit and as they went staggering home, the woman fell and broke the pot, and her husband beat and killed her in a drunken fury.[2] One day a party of men met [575] to gamble. One of them (as is generally the case, since gambling is not an aboriginal vice) was a Mahara. The party drank a lot of salphi juice, and perhaps some mahua spirit as well. There was a quarrel and the Mahara beat [564] one of the Maria, a serious matter involving the latter's excommunication. The Maria in his drunken rage killed the Mahara and then gave himself up to the police.[3]

Twelve out of the thirteen cases where murder was due to drinking landa rice-beer occurred at festivals. For example, at one festival a man abused his elder brother's wife for not tethering the cattle properly or clearing away the cow-dung. She abused him in return, and in his drunken fit he stabbed her with an arrow.[4] At another festival party,

[1] Kinberg, op. cit., p. 211.
[2] Case No 35.
[3] Case No 36.
[4] Case No 43.